

Beaufort S. C. Aug. 14th 1862

Brother L.

I received your very welcome letter, a week ago yesterday, and this is the first opportunity I have had to answer it. I was very glad to hear from you, although your letter came somewhat unexpectedly. Why I should be surprised by your writing to me, is more than I can explain, without it is that I have judged you, by myself.

You say, if I have not yet learned the value of a letter, I never shall, you may be sure I do know how to appreciate a letter, and I have sometimes felt hurt, by not hearing directly from you before. but I feel sorry, that I have ever felt like blaming you, as I now see, that I have no one to blame but myself, for not receiving a letter from you long ago.

I supposed you had, before this, learned my address from home, and have been waiting all along expecting to hear from you, but I had come to the conclusion that you would not write, and so I had made up my mind to write to you, and should have done so, even if I had not received your letter just as I did. You say you wrote for the purpose of finding whether I wrote as well as I used to at home. I cannot say that the task is any more agreeable, than then, but that you may know that I occasionally do something on this score. I will

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just-say, that-this is the 8th letter that-I have written since last-Friday morning, some of them were pretty long ones too. and I shall write another, as soon as I have finished this. I received a letter from your wife, a short-time ago, and answered it-last-Monday. She wrote that they were all well at-home. I hear from Elmer occasionally.

A description of the life we have led since we left-N. H. would not-interest-you, as you probably know all you ~~know~~ wish to about-soldiering. You can judge of the tedious monotony of our existence at-Ft-Jefferson, when I tell you that, we were shut-up inside the fort, with no chance to get-out, only occasionally in a boat, and no land within 25-miles of us. We had nothing but-bird salt-water to drink, and only a canteen full a day at-that. We were on allowance of water, from the 13th of Feb till the 27th of June. As to having you know what-that-is, especially on board these cursed transports. At-any rate, ^{we} were not sorry, when we were ordered to leave even to go to James' Island. As we expected at-the time. We arrived at-Hilton Head, just after the fight at-James' Island, and as our troops had met-with a repulse ~~we~~ and could do nothing more there just-then, we were taken to this town. In leaving Ft-Jefferson, we only jumped from the frying pan, to the fire. For that was the healthy place, and the men were in better condition when we left-there, than they have ever been at-any other time, since we left-Manchester, but now, half of the regt. are sick. They are dying every day, like rotten sheep. ~~and we are dying out of this sea, in our comparative~~

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You know all about this place already, so I can give you no additional information, only that the niggers are thicker, dirtier, lazier, and more disagreeable, if possible than when you were here. The number left behind by the rebels, when they were driven from this island, has been continually increasing by desertions from the main land. You have heard of Hunter's nigger brigade. Well, that has been all knocked to the devil, and I am glad of it for one. A little more than a fortnight ago Hunter killed a sentinel who was on guard before his quarters, for knocking a nigger over, who had just called him, a ~~damned~~ damned Yankee son-of-a-bitch. A short few days after this, a number of Hunter's black lambs, pitched into some of the N. Y. boys what provocation they had I have been unable to learn and killed three or four of them. The whole regiment to which the soldiers belonged, then rushed to their tents, got out their guns, and fired a volley into the niggers, killing a dozen and wounding as many more of them. Gen. Hunter then ordered one of the gun boats to fire into the soldiers, who refused. This order so exasperated the soldiers, that they took after Hunter who was obliged to take refuge on board one of the gun boats, to save his own skinning carcass. Since then the Nigger Brigade has been ~~disbanded~~ disbanded. It is said that Hunter will be removed from his command.

There has been a few skirmishes with the rebels since we landed on this island. They say the rebels are in considerable force on the main land, across the river from the opposite side. This is not a few gunboats on the river's side.

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There has been a few sKirmishes with the rebels since we landed on this island, they ~~they~~ the rebels are in considerable force on the main land, across the river from the opposite side of this island. They have Killed four of our Pickets

since we came here, but none belonging to this regt. although some of our boys have had bullets shot through their clothes.

I was on post where one of the Pa. boys were killed the rebels came off over in the night in a boat, got in the rear of the post and killed him before he knew it.

I stood on the post for ~~at~~ six nights in succession.

This is all the news I have to write just now. concerning the invitation you gave me, I will say I should like very much to come and see you, and have asked the Capt. about it; he says that it would be impossible for me to get a furlough at present. In your P. O. you wrote that if I could render any assistance to your friend Mr. Beman, who brought me your letter, I should greatly oblige you. Mr. Beman stopped here but a few moments and I did not open your letter till after he was gone.

I was very sorry that I did not read it sooner, for if I could have been of any service to him, I would gladly have helped him in any way, in my power, but if he stood in need of pecuniary assistance, I could have done him but little good, as money is among the things that were, with this regt. there is four months pay due us now. I saw and spoke with Da. Caspman, who stopped here on his way home.

I guess I have written about enough for once, and so I will stop. Please answer as soon as convenient. By the way I have read in the papers that there is a paper, printed by the soldiers at San Augustine, if you could send me one of them I should be very grateful for the favor. I want to get one to send north.

Yours brother Joe.
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From yor brother, Joe